

**REMARKS**

The Examiner has required restriction between:

The invention of claims 28-38 which are linking claims for the inventions of Group I, II and III:

Group I, claims 1-6, and 14 (in part) drawn to an HIV Gag-encoding DNA vaccine.

Group II, claims 1-6, and 14 (in part) drawn to an HIV Env-encoding DNA vaccine.

Group III, claims 7-13, and 14 (in part) drawn to an HIV vaccine composition comprising oligomeric gp140.

Group IV, claims 15-22, and 39 drawn to a method of generating an immune response.

Group V, claims 23, 24, and 27 drawn to a method of making oligomeric HIV Env gp140 proteins.

Group VI, claims 25 and 26, drawn to a method of making an HIV DNA vaccine.

Applicant hereby elect the invention of claims 28-38, and in the event of non-allowance of the linking claims 28-38, applicants additionally elect Group III and claims 7-13, and 14 (in part), without traverse.

Therefore, applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw the species election requirement and prosecute all pending claims in the application.

Applicants request examination of the elected subject matter on the merits.


In addition, please direct all further communications in this application to:

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In the unlikely event that the transmittal form is separated from this document and the Patent Office determines that an extension and/or other relief is required, Applicant petitions for any required relief including extensions of time and authorize the Commissioner to charge the cost of such petitions and/or other fees due in connection with the filing of this document to **Deposit Account No. 03-1664** referencing **PP019844.0003**.

Respectfully submitted,

NOVARTIS VACCINES AND DIAGNOSTICS, INC.

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